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A Pandemic and the Effects on Internships and Career Opportunities for College Students

In 2019, a leading online comparison resource called Compare Camp reported that 56.1% of college students that completed an internship were able to find entry-level, full-time employment. However, the Covid-19 pandemic has added a new variable to the equation the employment of college students and for college interns—the structure of the “workplace” has changed and will likely keep changing. According to a study done by Owl Labs, 70% of full-time employees are working from home using a remote work platform and 80% of these employees expect to work from home after 2020 at least three times a week. This presentation will explore how increased use of remote work platforms has affected internships and career opportunities among college students in 2020. Through an IRB-approved research project that uses surveys and interviews, this work will affirm the idea that internships are one of the best ways to develop job skills and career-readiness and provide an authentic work-based learning experiences for college students. The data collection considers two main questions: (1) What do established sources prior to the Covid-19 pandemic reveal about the impact of internships on college students' professional lives? (2) During the pandemic and after, how have and will

internships and career opportunities change because of remote work, and what skills do students need to develop to respond to changing work environments? With this information, college students, faculty, and employers can appropriately prepare for workplace changes and hiring needs in the current and post-pandemic worlds.